COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL.

At a court recently held for the despatch of public business, a great deal of interest was caused by the expectation of a report of the extensive improvements to be proposed to the Government, to correspond with the contemplated improvements at the west end of the town. As there are various and extensive interests engaged, the question occasioned much excitement.

PROPOSED EXTENSIVE IMPROVEMENTS IN THE CITY OF LONDON.

Mr. R. L. Jones brought up the report of the Improvement Committee, which, he said, was one of the most important description. He went at considerable length into the subject; but of the report, the most essential parts of which accurately enough detail the plan the committee wished to submit to the Government, it is only necessary to call the attention of the public to the following particulars:—

"That R. L. Jones, Esq., our chairman, having laid before us a plan of the city, with various suggested lines of improvements delineated thereon, we referred it to a special committee for consideration, in conjunction with the references from this court, together with any other improvements which they might see fit to suggest. That the special committee accordingly proceeded in the consideration of the whole subject, and had laid before them the second report of the select committee of the House of Commons upon metropolis improvements in 1838—the report of the 22nd July, 1842, in relation to the proposed improvements in the new courts of law—the report of the Administration of Justice Committee, in relation to a county rate upon the inhabitants of the city, of the 16th June, 1840—the plan of the city recently prepared under the authority of the commissioners of sewers, shewing the lines of sewers throughout the city, and the plan submitted by the chairman. But feeling sensibly the importance and necessity of various improvements being effected in consequence of the great increase that has taken place in the commerce of the city, as well as the number of carriages, carts, and vehicles of all descriptions thronging the public streets, the attention of the special committee was first directed more particularly to those main and principal thoroughfares wherein the greatest inconvenience is experienced, and the best means to be adopted for remedying the evil. With this object the special committee, after having examined the plans, documents, and witnesses, deemed it advisable that various improvements hereinafter stated should, at the earliest possible period, be carried into execution; but, in the first instance, that an additional access to the city from the west end of the metropolis should be immediately proceeded with. It has long been the subject of public complaint that Newgate-street, Snow-hill, and Holborn, the great thoroughfares to the north-western, and that of St. Paul's Churchyard, Ludgate-hill, and Fleet-street, to the western part of the metropolis, are both quite inadequate to the immense traffic of carriages, waggons, and vehicles of all descriptions which throng in those directions; and that the numbers of waggons and carts which carry provisions to and from Newgate-market frequently choke that thoroughfare, creating delays and inconvenience to the mail-coaches, and other impediments to the Post-office arrangements. The special committee, having examined carefully those plans which have been suggested to the Commissioners of Woods and Forests for a new thoroughfare, commencing in the neighbourhood of Leicester-square, through Lincoln's-Inn-fields into the city, crossing Farringdon-street by a viaduct, next considered the practicability of forming a street which would connect the end of Cheapside with such a thoroughfare at Lincoln's-Inn, and with a branch diverging into Holborn, which would effectually relieve the great pressure of the public traffic in the thoroughfares alluded to, and at the same time render a viaduct at Holboro-bridge unnecessary. They were of opinion that the formation of a street combining these desirable objects was decidedly practicable. The street to commence at the east end and continue along Paternoster-row, through Amen-corner, across Farringdon-street to the south-west corner of Farringdon-market in a straight line. The main line to continue across the middle of Fetter-lane to the city boundary, and a branch to diverge from the corner of the market to the end of Fetter-lane at the summit of the hill in the wide part of Holborn. The special committee having had the levels on this proposed new line accurately taken, find that the greatest inclination of any part of it would not be more than about 3 feet in 100, and that only in the distance of 370 feet. It occurred to them, in pursuing the investigation, that this new line would be still greatly improved by the removal of the whole of the houses between the north side of St. Paul's Churchyard and Paternoster-row from the end of Cheapside as far as Ave Maria-lane, which could be done for the additional sum of 150,000*l*. Should this be effected, that magnificent structure would terminate a vista of upwards of one-third of a mile, and the whole would, in addition to the increased facility and convenience which would be afforded to the growing commerce and traffic of the city, form one of the grandest improvements of an architectural character yet achieved in the metropolis. The order in which the special committee have classed the improvements which they consider called for is, according to the relative importance of each end, as follows:—A. From the east end of Paternoster-row to Fetter-lane, and a branch street to Holborn, commencing with the houses at the west end of Cheapside, projecting beyond the line of St. Martin's-le-Grand, all between Paternoster-row and St. Paul's Churchyard, as far as Ave Maria-lane, Amen-corner, crossing the Old Bailey to Farringdon-street, to Shoe-lane, Printer-street, Great New-street to Fetter-lane, to the city boundary; and the branch street from Little New-street to the north end of Fetter-lane, Holborn, about 3,360 feet in length. The greatest acclivity in the whole line of this will not be more than 1 in 31, and that for only about 370 feet. B. From the north end of Dowgate-hill to the east end of St. Paul's Churchyard, thence to Earl-street, Blackfriars, through Tower Royal, Little and Great Distaff-lanes, crossing the Old Change into St. Paul's Churchyard, about 1,360 feet in length; and from the Old Change, through Knightrider-court, Carter-lane, Godliman-street, Bell-yard, Addle-hill, to the east end of East-street, about 1,200 feet in length. C. Watling-street, from Aldermary Church to the west end of St. Paul's churchyard, about 1,055 feet in length. D. The Poultry, on the north side to the Old Jewry, and 100 feet of the north side of Mansion House-street, about 1,055 feet in length. From the Mansion House across Bucklersbury and Sise-lane to Queen-street, from Watling-street to the east end of Basing-lane; the east side of Queen-street from Watling-street to Thomas-street, about 1,400 feet in length. E. Lime-street, east side, from Culham-street to Fenchurch-street, Leadenhall-market from Fenchurch-street, through to the south end of Gracechurch-street, about 800 feet in length. Aldgate, south side, from the Saracen's Head to Jewry-street and the east end of Leadenhall-street, at its junction with Fenchurch-street. F. Broad-street-buildings to the Curtain-road, through Half-moon-street to Sun-street, thence to Skinner-street, and on to Worship-street, about 1,550 feet in length. G. From Aldersgate-street, opposite the end of Jewin-street, to Smithfield, and from the corner of Little Britain, across Bartholomew-close, to communicate with the above line of street to Smithfield, about 1,280 feet in length. H. Threadneedle-street, north side, at its junction with Broad-street, and south side, from the church of St. Benet Fink to Finch-lane, about 265 feet in length. I. Holborn-bridge, north side, about 90 feet in length. Butcherhall-lane, east side, about 85 feet in length, St. Martin's-le-Grand, north-east corner, Angel-street. K. Maiden-lane, north and south sides, about 275 feet in length. Jewin-street, south side, from the corner of Red Cross-street to Red Cross-square, and north corner next Aldersgate-street, Aldermanbury, the west side of the south end; Milk-street, east side next Cheapside, White Rose-court, Coleman-street, and Mason's-alley. Moor-lane, south side, east corner, and north end west side, from White-street to Type-street, and south end Milton-street, east side. New Bridge-street, Blackfriars, through Tudor-street, to the Temple.

"Having thus detailed these improvements, the special committee turned their attention to that part of the reference whereby we were directed to report our opinion as to the best means of accomplishing these objects, and having had under consideration the various improvements which have been carried out during the last twelve years, as connected with the avenues and approaches to London-bridge, ascertained that our expenditure in this respect has averaged about 150,000*l*. per annum, a sum which they apprehend, if the same could be provided, in a few years would enable all the proposed improvements to be carried into effect; and feeling that the corporation have not the means at their disposal of effecting these improvements, however desirable the same may appear to be, the special committee were of opinion, as her Majesty has been graciously pleased to appoint a special commission for the purpose of considering of further metropolitan improvements, which commission is now sitting, that a favourable opportunity exists for drawing the attention of the Government and the commission as to the best means to be adopted for raising the requisite funds for these purposes, and recommended that we should be empowered to confer with them upon this desirable object; and we, agreeing with the special committee in the said report, submit the same to this honourable court."

The report was signed by twenty-one members.

The Chairman having moved that the report should be printed, and that the committee should confer with the Government on the subject, a discussion took place.

Mr. Hall said it was necessary to take a report, involving such important matters to the civic community, into serious consideration before they sanctioned a committee to go with it in their hands to the Government. The court ought to have time to see what was worthy of their approval, and what deserved their disapprobation, in the numerous lines enumerated. He thought that Newgate-street, which the committee did not seem to consider worth much notice, required to be completed, as other improvements there had commenced. (Hear, hear.) He thought, too, that it would be necessary to do something with Holborn-hill. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. W. Lawrence said it was not to be supposed that the improvements proposed would be carried out exactly as they were suggested. There would, no doubt, be important alterations, but the details would be discussed at a future period. Holborn-hill must remain as it was, and they would be justified to go to the right or to the left of it to effect an improvement which was impracticable on the spot itself. As for the proposition to widen Watling-street—so long and warmly contended for—the expense of taking down one side of that street would be so enormous, that the committee were afraid to look at it at all, especially as a much cheaper line could be had at one side of it.

Mr. Lott desired to know of whom Mr. Lawrence learned that the interference with Watling-street would be so enormously expensive?

Mr. Lawrence said he had the authority of surveyors and others who were well qualified to judge.

Mr. Lott would be glad to see the report printed, in order that those who were likely to disapprove, might have the full opportunity of doing so. He considered that the committee were breaking faith by leaving the improvement of Watling-street out of their list, for the court had pledged itself that that street should be widened, and that such improvement should be amongst the very first undertaken.

Mr. King said the court ought to be most cautious of dealing with such wholesale alterations, calculated as they were to affect in so serious a manner such a mass of property.

Mr. Anderton said his constituents would reasonably ask what was to be done with Fetter-lane, that dreadful nuisance.

Mr. Bagleton seconded Mr. Lott's views with respect to widening Watling-street.

The Lord Mayor said he was one of the commissioners appointed by Parliament to take into consideration the most advisable means of improving the metropolis, and he assured the court that if they did not send a report as to the improvements they thought necessary, they would be left out altogether in the general plan.

Mr. R. L. Jones spoke of the necessity of conferring with Government on the subject as

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